



**Customer Service and Operations Committee**

**Information Item IV-C**

**December 6, 2012**

**Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority  
**Board Action/Information Summary**

<input type="radio"/> Action <input checked="" type="radio"/> Information	MEAD Number: 103097	Resolution: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
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**TITLE:**

Voice of the Customer, First Quarter, FY13 Results

**PRESENTATION SUMMARY:**

This information item describes the first quarter results of the new "Voice of the Customer" (VOC) report that WMATA has undertaken for bus and rail services. In addition, a separate survey is conducted for MetroAccess customers and those results are presented here. In total, 770 rail and bus customers responded to the survey covering customer satisfaction, reliability, safety, cleanliness and customer service.

**PURPOSE:**

To inform the Customer Service and Operations Committee about development of a new key performance indicator.

**DESCRIPTION:**

**Key Highlights:**

- In our Voice of the Customer survey, Metro rail and bus riders gave the agency very high marks for safety and security onboard trains, buses, and in waiting areas including stations.
- Overall customer satisfaction with train service is comparable to other large transit properties, and bus rider satisfaction scores are higher than most other transit properties.
- While representing a smaller group of those surveyed, the top satisfaction scores were given to Metro's public information tools for travel planning. For example the website scored 100% satisfaction

among those who use it; the Customer Call center at 91% satisfaction; and system maps with 83% satisfaction among bus customers and 100% satisfaction among rail users.

- Long considered a proxy for loyalty, Metro riders' likelihood to recommend the service also got high marks.
- This VOC report will be combined with Mystery Shopper results and reports that provide comments received in Customer Service through phone calls and emails to the agency. Together, the three tools provide managers and operating personnel with important insights about the customer experience that enable them to recognize good performance, create improvement plans, and make operational decisions with customer feedback at the forefront.
- The new Voice of the Customer Report will replace the former KPI that only reflected the volume of customer complaints to provide a more comprehensive index of customer satisfaction.

#### **Background and History:**

Metro undertook a Voice of the Customer survey which began with a baseline setting period in the first quarter, FY2013. Data was collected via phone from 385 bus and 385 rail customers who reported that they rode the service within the past 30 days. Random numbers were dialed until a customer was found. In addition, appropriate percentages were used to dial cell-phone only households (overall, 21% of calls were cell-phone only households ---known to be younger, more urban, lower income, and more likely to be Black or Hispanic). The calls were made in proportion to the percentage of riders from each of the jurisdiction:

	<u>DC</u>	<u>VA</u>	<u>MD</u>
RAIL	34%	33%	33%
BUS	59%	17%	24%

MetroAccess users were drawn from the database of MetroAccess customers. We spoke with 400 customers (or their care provider if they were not able to speak with us). These calls took place May, 2012.

Overall, very high safety and security scores were seen across the board in waiting areas and riding on the buses/trains. High satisfaction scores were given for both bus and rail (80%+ for both). Metro trip planning scored quite well also with the website getting 100% satisfaction among those who use it (6% bus and 14% rail usage) as did the call center—91% satisfaction (9% bus/1% rail usage). Finally, the maps did well among users with 83% satisfaction among bus customers and 100% satisfaction among rail users (12% bus/10% rail users).

**Discussion:**

Bus Findings

A customer satisfaction index was created combining three items -- overall satisfaction, overall reliability and customer's likelihood to recommend the service to a friend. Bus' combined index score is 79. A few demographic differences were noted. Metro's younger customers (under 35 years old) report significantly lower levels of reliability than other riders. Also, bus commuters are significantly more likely than non-commuters to recommend service to a friend. Similarly, Hispanic customers are significantly more likely to recommend the bus service to friends than are non-Hispanic customers. Some differences emerged by jurisdiction as noted below:

Overall Satisfaction: DC -80%, MD-86%, VA-94%

Reliability: DC-68%, MD-76%, VA-82%

Likelihood to recommend: DC-74%, MD-85%, VA-85%

As on-time performance most likely drives reliability scores, riders were asked about their most recent bus service experience. In total, 76% noted their bus was on-time. Among the 24% who said their bus was late, two-thirds noted the bus was over 5 minutes late. Additional questions were asked about bus cleanliness, bus stop cleanliness, overall satisfaction with bus stop, and percentage of time the SmarTrip® farebox worked.

The survey also queried service delivery by employees. While 75% of bus riders indicated operators greeted or acknowledged them when they boarded (which prior customer research indicated was expected by riders), a higher number -- 83% --

said they believed the bus driver would be approachable if they had a question to ask. Among those customers who had an interaction with the bus driver (10%), 62% said the bus driver met their expectations and 15% did not.

#### Rail Findings

Rail customers were asked the same items as bus customers including satisfaction, reliability and likelihood to recommend. While satisfaction and likelihood to recommend are relatively strong scores, overall reliability lags behind. Demographic differences include that Hispanic riders believe reliability of the rail system is significantly lower than non-Hispanics. The oldest customers, those over 55, are most likely to recommend the rail system to their friends. Meanwhile, commuters on the rail system are much less likely to recommend the rail system to their friends than are infrequent riders --- the opposite of commuter bus riders. A geographic difference emerged as well – Yellow, Blue and Green riders were more likely to rate reliability as higher compared to Red and Orange line riders. Compared to other large transit systems, Metrorail is on par with overall customer satisfaction but not in reliability. Total index score for rail is 77.

Other questions asked of rail customers include expected duration of trip vs. actual trip duration (they are very similar), cleanliness of station, climate control of station, cleanliness of train, climate control of train and smoothness of ride. Overall, customers rated station cleanliness among the highest in the industry. Not the same with cleanliness on the trains where Metro lags behind some comparably sized transit properties.

With respect to rail service delivery, 69% of customers said that they found the station managers to be approachable. While only 16% of customers reported interaction with a station manager, the employees met customer expectations 59% of the time.

#### In System Communications

A portion of the customer survey focused on in-system communications, which we know from prior work is key to the customer experience. More than 3 in 4 customers rated Passenger Information Displays (PIDS) as accurate. In terms of public announcements, 44% of rail customers heard and

understood announcements while 33% said they heard announcements but did not understand them. On buses, 57% of the customers reported hearing and understanding announcements while 11% said they heard the announcements but did not understand them.

### Security

Security on Metro is rated quite high. In fact, Metro customers rate security on the bus, train, in-station, and at the bus stop higher than any other transit property in the country. The one area that did not get rated quite as strongly is parking lot security, for which no comparable data is currently available.

### MetroAccess

MetroAccess customers were called on the phone and asked a series of questions about the performance of the system and the service they received. Questions included safety, courtesy of the driver, helpfulness of the driver, cleanliness of the vehicle, comfortableness, ease of making reservations, and getting you to your destination on time.

Overall, MetroAccess scored very high on almost all variables queried. Safety was at the top of the list with nine and a half out of ten MetroAccess customers giving high performances scores for 'delivered in a safe manner' and 'feeling safe during their trip.' Driver scores were also particularly high with nine out of ten giving high performance scores for 'courtesy of the driver', 'helpfulness of the driver', 'driver knew how to get you to your destination'.

In all service industries, customers expect problems to occur. Customer loyalty is not driven by if a problem occurs, but rather how the problem is addressed by the service provider.

Customers care about whether an individual tried their best to assist them. In the case of MetroAccess, 41% of customers reported having a problem on the system. This number is consistent with past surveys undertaken. And of those customers who experienced a problem on the system, 91% said that MetroAccess tried their best to help them – a very high number.

## **FUNDING IMPACT:**

The development of a new key performance indicator has no impact on funding.

**TIMELINE:**

- Convert customer satisfaction indices to a meaningful KPI.
- Report trends to Board as part of Vital Signs in Q4 FY13.
- Provide management and operations personnel with customer feedback quarterly to recognize good performance and address opportunities to improve.



# Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

## Voice of the Customer First Quarter, FY13 Results

Customer Service and Operations Committee

December 6, 2012



## Key Findings – WMATA Service

1. Safety & Security scores high: In waiting areas, riding on buses/trains
2. High satisfaction scores across both bus and rail
3. High likelihood to recommend, both bus and rail
4. Trip planning well received
  - Website (100% bus/rail)
  - Call center (91% bus/100% rail)
  - Map (83% bus/100% rail)



# Key Findings – Bus Service

## TOP TWO BOX

- High satisfaction with bus ride 84%
- High reliability of bus service 73%
- High likeliness to recommend 79%

TOTAL INDEX SCORE: 79





# Metrobus Satisfaction Scores

- Bus on-time performance
  - 76% noted on-time service
- Cleanliness of bus 81%
- Satisfaction with bus stop 80%
- Cleanliness of bus stop 74%
- SmarTrip farebox worked well 85%





# Customer Service Frontline Service Delivery - Bus

Bus Operator greeted or acknowledged when boarding 75%



Approachable 83%

10% had an interaction with bus driver:

62% met expectations, 15% did not meet expectations

Knowledgeable 81%

Courteous 87%



# Key Findings – Rail Service

## TOP TWO BOX

- High satisfaction with rail service 80%
- Average overall reliability scores 65%
- High likelihood to recommend 79%

TOTAL INDEX SCORE: 77





# Metrorail Satisfaction Scores

Average expected rail trip: 30.7 minutes

Average actual rail trip: 33.7 minutes

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Cleanliness of station 73%

STATION

Climate control of station 77%

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Cleanliness of train 65%

Climate control of train 77%

TRAIN

Smoothness of ride 71%



# In System Communications

Accuracy of PIDS 74%

Usage of non-electronic signs 38%  
(77% report non-electronic signs helpful)



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## RAIL Announcements:

44% heard/understood

33% heard/did not understand

## BUS Announcements:

57% heard/ understood

11% heard/did not understand



# Customer Service Frontline Service Delivery - Rail

Station Managers:

Approachable      69%

16% of customers noted a station manager interaction:  
59% met expectations, 24% did not meet expectations

Knowledgeable      78%

Courteous      75%





# Security on Metro High Overall

On bus security: 87%

On train security: 86%

In station security: 85%

Bus stop security: 83%

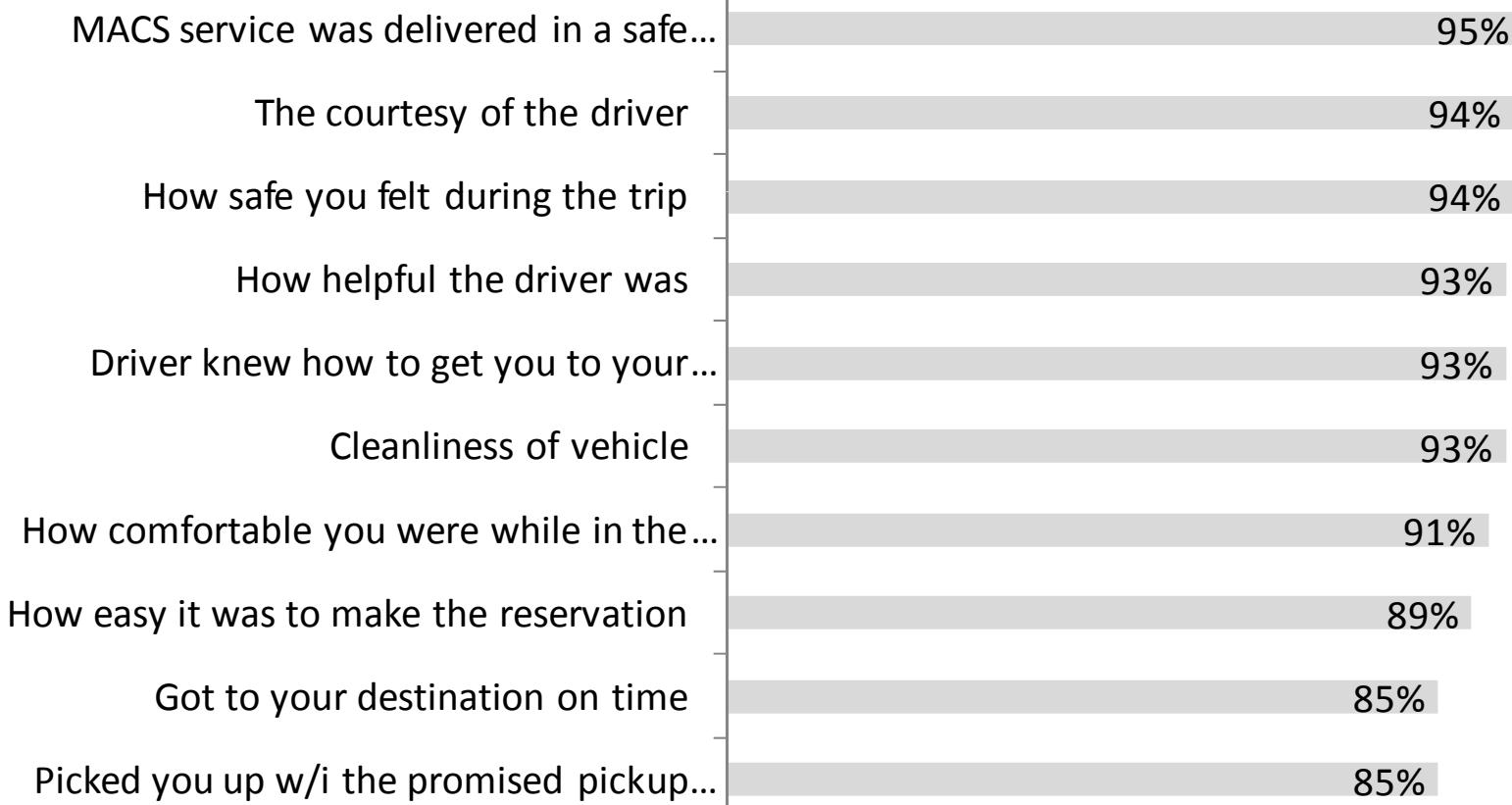
Parking lot security: 69%





# MetroAccess High Level of Performance

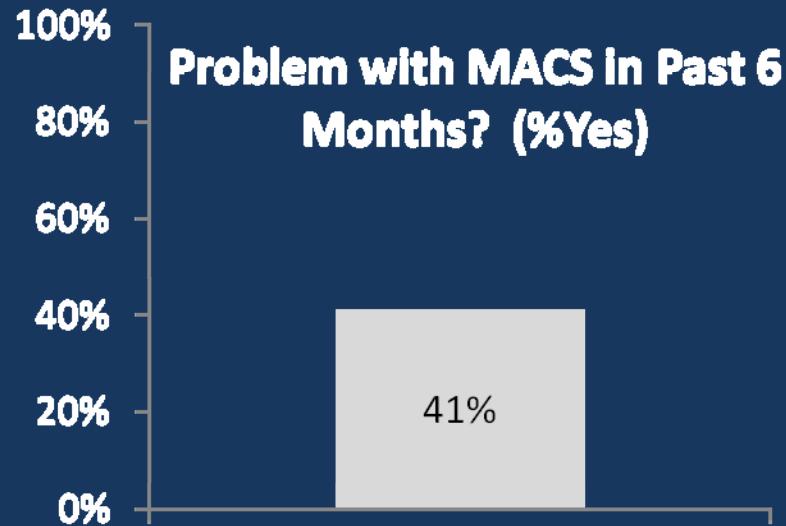
## TOP TWO BOX RATINGS



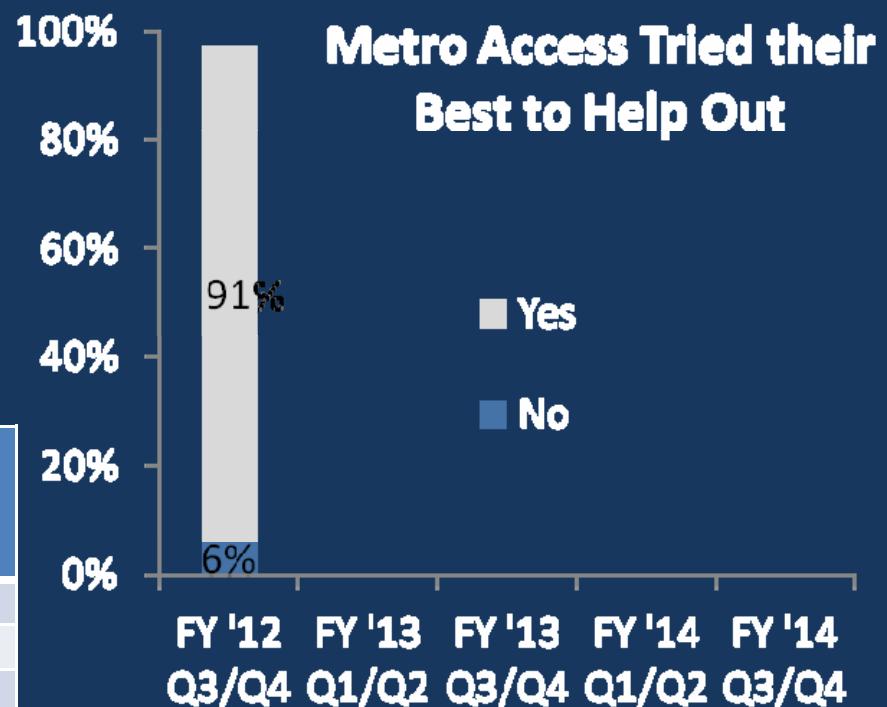
*Q. Thinking about your most recent trip, please rate how satisfied you were?*



# MetroAccess Consistent # of Issues, Does Excellent Job Of Helping



Which Category Best Describes Your Problem	FY '12 Q3/Q4 %
MetroAccess vehicle was late	56
MetroAccess vehicle did not show up	29
Rude/Discourteous behaviors by driver, service representative, or other person	27
Problem with Where's My Ride	21
Problem with Reservations	16
Did not feel safe during the trip	10





# Overall Satisfaction - MetroAccess Challenges: On Time Performance

Customer  
Satisfaction  
62%

Reasons for Dissatisfaction – Top Mentions	FY '12 Q3/Q4 %
Pick me up late/Do not show up on time	36
Having to wait too long for a ride/Half hour scheduling window not convenient	22
Arrive late for appointments	21
Cost/Prices vary/Increased	19
Drivers re-routed wrong/Go past my stop/Don't know where they are going/Ride is too long	19

*Q. Why did you give that rating? [asked of those who rated satisfaction a 1 or 2 (Open-ended, multiple response)]*



## Next Steps

Customer satisfaction KPI's developed to add to Vital Signs

Rail and Bus are working on developing customer service action plans and customer service programs

MetroAccess adding customer component to new contract terms

Will be back to Board in 2013 with update on progress